

AS SEEN IN
25 BEAUTIFUL
HOMES

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Converted Victorian public house, built in 1871

LOCATION Kent

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, utility room, study, six bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We had a four-bedroom house in Surrey,' says Josie.

SITTING ROOM

'This is a calm and serene spot,' says Josie.

'The look is smart, but not too formal and very family friendly.'

Ektorp three-seater sofas in Edsken

Brown, £475 each, Ikea.

Cushions, from £15 each,

John Lewis. Throw, £80,

Bronte by Design. Garrat

small box coffee table,

£500, Laura Ashley.

Curtains made up in

Antoinette in Rose,

£34m, Clarke & Clarke

Cause for CELEBRATION

Josie and Mark Parsley despaired of ever finding their ideal new home until they discovered a former village pub

FEATURE JANET McMEEKIN | PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD GADSBY



VIEW TO DINING AREA
 'I tend to work better when surrounded by muted shades, which is why I chose a subtle palette here,' says Josie. Walls painted in French Grey matt emulsion, £35.50 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene. Bespoke glazed doors, £3,800, Mount Sion Joinery

FAVOURITE ROOM 'I absolutely love the kitchen – the light that floods into this area is amazing and it's such a welcoming and uplifting space'

After Josie Parsley and her husband Mark decided to relocate with their children Tom, Jamie and Grace, from Surrey to Kent, they had high hopes the move would prove to be a quick process. 'My best friend and business partner, Rachel Fraser, lives in the county and, having visited her home, we fell in love with the area,' Josie explains. 'We put our house on the market and started looking for a large period property – preferably in a village – with a decent-sized garden.'

However, the Parsleys soon began to feel rather disheartened with the places they viewed. 'Virtually all the character houses within our budget seemed to fall into the Tudor category – exactly what I was trying to avoid,' Josie recalls. 'I grew up in a Tudor house but now, being a six-foot-tall adult, I really can't cope with a lack of headroom. I find that many of these properties have wobbly walls, tiny windows and tend to be a little too dark and claustrophobic for my taste.'

CHANGE OF FORTUNE
 Luckily, the couple then received the details of a converted Victorian pub that renewed their enthusiasm. 'I immediately realised it had vast potential and couldn't wait to see it,' says Josie. 'The house had enormous windows, a lovely airy feel and, despite being quite tired, it was a project we could really get our teeth into. 'The location was stunning,' she continues. 'Not only is the village on top of a hill with views across the Weald of Kent, the house is right at the village centre, at the heart of the community, next to the new pub, shop and church. When Mark turned to me and said, "This is amazing", I agreed and we knew that we'd just found our dream home.'

SETTING TO WORK
 Having moved into the six-bedroom house in September 2011, the couple hired a builder and, with Josie stepping into the role of project manager, a nine-month renovation began. 'Mark and I have huge respect for the history and architecture of older ▶



KITCHEN
 The property's grand proportions are clearly evident in this room. Cabinetry, appliances and worktops, £32,000 in total, Traditional Bespoke Furniture



KITCHEN
 Emma Bridgewater ceramics make a colourful display. Starry Skies four-cup teapot, £49.95, Emma Bridgewater



FRONT DOOR
 This arched entrance is a reminder of the building's origins as a public house. Door painted in Blue Gray exterior eggshell, £53.50 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



STUDY

'The landing was spacious enough to transform into a home office,' Josie says. To learn more about Josie's stationery business, visit Fraserandparsley.com



GUEST BEDROOM

A bold check wallpaper sets the tone here. Ranold wallpaper in Light Grey, £68 per roll, Sandberg. Dylan check throw, £45, Laura Ashley



TOM AND JAMIE'S BEDROOM

'I came up with some decorating ideas that I felt would work but let the boys make the final decision,' says Josie. The New England bed in Silk White, £375, Aspace, is a near-identical design. Monogrammed cushions, £50 each, Coco Cuscino

properties,' says Josie, 'and, although we could see it was going to be a time-consuming and expensive revamp, we owed it to the house to restore it sensitively to its former glory.'

PERIOD PANACHE

To achieve their aims, the pair set about reintroducing Victorian corning and architraves, replacing the windows with double-glazed wooden sash designs, creating an elegant new kitchen, upgrading the bathrooms, installing a utility room and decorating throughout.

'The ground floor comprised one large sprawling room,' Josie explains. 'So it seemed to make sense to divide this reception area into two. Being an avid reader of interiors magazines, I had a tear sheet in my binder of an ingenious idea that lent itself beautifully to solving the problem; a set of handsome glazed doors that can be either closed or folded back on themselves.'

After removing a second superfluous staircase, the couple were able to reopen an original doorway into their new sitting room. 'During this process, we stepped briefly back in time when the threshold was taken up and the old red floral carpet that had once been on the floor of the pub was revealed,' Josie recalls.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Josie's love of interior design and clear vision of the style she wanted to achieve for this charming house have culminated in a sophisticated and elegant home with an air of timelessness. 'I wanted a clean, crisp yet warm and welcoming look, with New England influences and some classic French twists,' she says. 'Everyone who knows me says that the style of my home and the look of the stationery I produce with Rachel go hand-in-hand. They similarly have a significant emphasis on design and colour co-ordination, both essentials in my life.'

'Now, when I walk into our house, I absolutely love it,' Josie concludes. 'All the work and effort has been more than worthwhile and we've got a fabulous home where we can bring up our children surrounded by this idyllic countryside.' 25

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 146



DESIGN ADVICE

'I've discovered that online moodboards are a great way to keep track of the schemes and new products you like'

MASTER BEDROOM
Toile soft furnishings help lighten the look. Curtains and cushions made up in Constance in Raspberry, £45m, Cabbages & Roses. Sweetpea & Willow's Colonial Curved Rattan bedstead, from £995, would suit this setting



BATHROOM

Panelled walls and period-style fixtures give a nod to the house's grand Victorian architecture.

For bespoke panelled interiors, try Hallidays. Victoria Plumb's Winchester range, from £129 for a pedestal basin, is a match for the sanitaryware

Find more inspiring bathroom schemes at housetohome.co.uk/25beautifulhomes